

SACKVILLE
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BAPTIST + CHURCH.
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Historical Sketch.

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REV. W. H. WARREN, M. A.



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SACKVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH.

A HISTORICAL SKETCH,

BY REV. W. H. WARREN, M. A.

The preparation of the present historical outline has been undertaken at the request of the New Brunswick Eastern Baptist Association, that body having wisely decided to endeavor to secure, as far as practicable, reliable records in relation to the rise and progress of each of the churches of which it is composed. At the annual meeting held at Point deBute in July last, the paper, in a very abbreviated form, was presented by the writer and cordially adopted by the Association.

The Baptist church at Sackville is not only the senior member of the body of associated churches with which it stands related, but it is the oldest of the Baptist churches in British North America. This fact alone invests its records with a special interest to all intelligent readers who take delight in acquainting themselves with the early civil and religious history of our country.

In seeking for the origin of the pioneer church, we are carried back to the very beginning of our provincial life. It was founded in 1763, the year in which the treaty of Paris terminated the long and bloody struggle which had been carried on between England and France for supremacy in America. By that treaty fair Acadia and, indeed, almost the entire North American continent became subject to British rule. The veterans of France, after a brave and vigorous defence, yielded their last stronghold to the superior forces of Britain, and over Beausejour waved the victorious flag which has ever since been the palladium of our provincial liberties.

Fertile valleys and extensive dykelands, on which the French had spent years of wearying labor, were spread out in all their tempting fertility be-

fore the gaze of the new inhabitants. There were, indeed, but few of the facilities for commercial intercourse which are enjoyed at the present time. Public highways were not numerous, and they were inferior in construction. A few villages had made some considerable advancement in agriculture under the old regime, but the greater part of the country was still covered with the primeval forest.

A proclamation, issued by Governor Lawrence, soon after the peace of Paris, offering full religious and civil liberty to all who desired to become residents of Nova Scotia, induced many persons to come hither from both Old and New England. Among the emigrants from the latter country, a company of Baptists from Swansea, Mass., came to Tantramar, as Sackville was then called, and secured a large grant of land. This was one of the earliest grants made by the government in connection with what is now designated as New Brunswick. Some of the new settlers had served in subduing the original French owners, and had probably formed a somewhat favorable impression of the character and prospects of the country during their military campaigns. They had now the privilege of receiving a measure of compensation for their former services.

The names of the Baptist members were Benjamin Mason, Nathan Mason, Charles Seaman, Thomas Lewis, Gilbert Seaman, and Oliver Mason, with their wives, and Experience Baker. In anticipation of their removal to Nova Scotia they had formed themselves into a church before leaving their native land. Rev. Nathan Mason was chosen as their pastor. They arrived at Tantramar in the summer of 1763, and at once set about settling upon the

land assigned them by government grant. Many disheartening difficulties stood in their way, but they endeavored courageously to overcome them all. The little church was not neglected amid the privations of their new surroundings. Under the judicious pastoral care of Elder Mason the number of members became increased, so that in 1771 they were enabled to report sixty persons as being in fellowship with the church.

About the year 1771, after spending eight toilsome years in Sackville, the original immigrants became discontented with the state of affairs in this country. They complained that the government had not carried out the terms of the agreement by which so many persons had been induced to make their homes in these provinces. Charles Dixon, Esq., who came to Sackville about this time, makes the following remarks in relation to this matter:—"At first glance things wore a gloomy aspect. There were few inhabitants but wanted to sell their lands and go hence. I thought there must be some cause for this universal discontent. The spring was very late. I began to walk about the country, and went over to Sackville. After a few days investigation, finding the cause of discontent to be largely due to indolence and lack of knowledge, I purchased a tract of land at Sackville of Daniel Hawkins, containing about two thousand five hundred acres, for two hundred and sixty pounds. To this I removed my family on June 8th. Most of the rest of the settlers bought and settled elsewhere."

That the pioneer settlers may have had just cause for dissatisfaction is by no means improbable, for it has been a failing among governments and land proprietors in all ages to endeavor to promote immigration by means of flattering inducements which have proved to be misleading to unwary foreigners. But, whatever may have been the real merits of the matters complained of, it is certain that the original Baptist colonists determined to dispose of their lands and return to their former homes in Massachusetts. They took their departure sometime during the year 1771.

Forty-seven members of the church remained, and carried on the good work of advancing the spiritual interests of the community. These bore the familiar names

of Ayer, Cole, Estabrooks, Killam, Read, Tingley, Smith, Seaman, and Ward. It is seen clearly that these names have had a prominent place in the records of the church for more than a century. These earnest laborers, though seriously weakened by the departure of so many active co-laborers, did not give up in despair, but addressed themselves with renewed energy to the performance of the duties which rested upon them. Mr. Job Seaman appears to have succeeded Elder Nathan Mason in the pastoral care of the flock. He was probably a son of one of the original founders of the church. For several years he seems to have discharged the duties of his office with satisfaction, instructing the people and doing all in his power to encourage his brethren to persevere in religious activity. At length he resigned his charge and made his home for the rest of his life in the State of Ohio.

In the summer of 1781 the community was visited by one of the most remarkable revivalists connected with the early history of this province. The name of Henry Alline is familiar to many. Born in Rhode Island in 1748, he came to Nova Scotia in early life and settled at Falmouth. After his conversion in 1775, he began his remarkable career as an evangelist. He seems to have gone to all parts of the Maritime Provinces preaching with a degree of earnestness and power to which the people were entirely unaccustomed. He was not an educated man, nor had he very clear ideas relative to the doctrines and ordinances of the New Testament. But he was a zealous and sincere preacher, whose burning words were blessed in the conversion of thousands of precious souls.

This energetic pioneer made a tour through Cumberland and Westmorland counties, in July 1781, visiting Amherst Point, Fort Lawrence, Sackville, Bay Verte, Memramcook and Petitcodiac. He met with varied experiences during his pilgrimage, being received by some with much cordiality and even enthusiasm, whilst others ridiculed and opposed him, threatening in some instances to lay violent hands upon him.

In relation to Sackville the following entry is made in his Journal, under date July 31: "This day, after visiting some people, I preached in the evening and God was there with such power that some who had known the truth before were almost overcome with joy." It is very evident that the persons here spoken of as having "known the truth before" were the remain-

ing members of the original Baptist church who, though pastorless and somewhat scattered were still interested in spiritual affairs and delighted to hear the stirring notes of the gospel trumpet. The visit of this intensely emotional preacher must have exerted a very marked influence upon these neglected members, awakening them from spiritual lethargy and inciting them to renewed consecrations to the Master's service.

It was Mr. Alline's custom to organize churches, wherever he could prevail upon the people to do so, upon a broad basis, taking no cognizance of the doctrinal peculiarities or differences existing among the various religious denominations. At Sackville he endeavored to form a church on this foundation. His own words state the facts very tersely: "The church now began to gather together in gospel fellowship, without any bars or separations about different sects or denominations; but whoever loved and brought Christ and belonged to Him, were freely received into full communion." This generous attempt to harmonize, or, rather, to ignore denominational distinctions met the usual fate in failing signally to accomplish the purpose of its originator. Most of the Baptists, whether they were induced to unite with the new organization or not, retained the views of the doctrinal and practical teachings of the New Testament which they had been taught by their fathers and which they found to be confirmed by their personal studies. They could not, therefore, conscientiously hold fellowship with what seemed to them out of harmony with the example and precepts of the Saviour himself. They were Baptists still, in whatever society they might be provisionally placed. The new organization, no doubt, disconcerted them very seriously, and even threatened the extinction of the original Baptist church. Indeed, so good an authority as Dr. Cramp states emphatically that the church "died out." We are happy to be able to present evidence, however, which cannot fail to convince our readers that the original Sackville Baptist church, established in 1763, has come down to the present moment along the plain lines of "apostolical succession," so far at least as its membership is concerned.

The period intervening between the time of Mr. Alline's visit to Sackville and the close of the last century is one of obscurity in the history of the church. In the absence of any reliable records, we find it difficult to obtain sufficient data to en-

able us to give anything like a clear idea of the state of affairs in the community, so far as church matters are concerned. That the flock had no permanent shepherd during this period seems evident enough, but it is equally obvious that religious services continued to be held with greater or less regularity. Incidental notices are given of occasional visits made by Baptist ministers to the place and of services held by these men in connection with the church. Messrs. Windsor and Rounds are mentioned by Benedict as having done some useful work in this way. Dr. Bill also intimates that Joseph Read, a relation of those who still bear this name in Westmorland county, spent some time in endeavouring to build up the little church. He subsequently removed to Horton, Nova Scotia, where he remained till his death.

The approach of a new century gave promise of a brighter epoch. It was visited in 1798 by a young man whose name has become very dear to the hearts of a large proportion of the people of New Brunswick. The name of Joseph Crandall stands foremost on the list of "Baptist Fathers." He came early in life from Rhode Island to Chester, N. S., where he subsequently experienced a change of heart under the preaching of Thomas Handly, Culpman and Joseph Dimock. Later in life, whilst attending revival meetings at Onslow he was led to make a public profession of faith in Christ and he was soon afterwards strongly impressed with a sense of duty to engage in preaching the everlasting gospel. Uneducated as he was his mind was much perplexed in relation to the path of duty; but under the friendly aid of Elder Harris Harding, he began to exercise his spiritual gifts, and it became clearly apparent to all his friends that Divine approval rested upon his ministrations. On one occasion his feelings were intensely wrought upon whilst addressing his hearers. His own account of the incident is as follows: "I continued speaking for more than an hour. I could not hold my peace, for it was like the bursting of an overflowing fountain. A world of sinners came up before me like a vast field to which I could see no end. When the scene had passed from me, I looked around me, and the two ministers, Joseph Dimock and Harris Harding, were weeping, and many more wept for joy." We have reason to believe that this occurred about the time of his ordination at Sackville.

At the age of twenty-seven he came as a licentiate to Sackville, in the year 1798. The people received him very cordially, and his earnest preaching made a lasting impression upon those who attended his meetings. A strong desire was expressed for his permanent settlement in the community, and after careful deliberation he consented to comply with the general wish. It was decided to call a council to consider the propriety of setting him apart to the work of the gospel ministry. We are fortunate in having the record of the clerk of the ordaining council. Elder William Chipman furnished Dr. Cramp with the following interesting account of that event:

"The council consisted of Elder Edward Manning and myself, then seventeen years old, chosen and sent from the church; Elder Theodore S. Harding, from Horton; Elder Joseph Dimock, and Deacon John Bradshaw, from Chester. We met at Sackville, N. B., on October 4, 1799, and continued there seven days, during which time the gospel was preached daily, both publicly and from house to house, and a revival of religion was the result, and a time of much rejoicing by the Lord's people. Elder Manning was chosen moderator of the council, and myself clerk. A church was constituted consisting of about twenty members. On Monday, October 8, Bro. Joseph Crandall was ordained pastor over them. Elder T. S. Harding preached the ordination sermon, Elder Manning gave the charge, and Elder Joseph Dimock the right hand of fellowship. The season was one of the wonderful manifestations of God's power and presence, saints rejoicing, backsliders returning, and sinners crying for mercy. A host of people were in attendance, and thirteen were added to the church before we left the place."

In this record it is not intimated that a single baptism took place, and it seems almost incredible that such an omission should be made if any baptism occurred during the visit of these ministers. Previous to that council no baptism could have recently taken place, as Joseph Crandall was but a licentiate, and therefore unqualified to administer the ordinance. Who then were the twenty persons formed into a church, and the thirteen subsequently added to their number? They must have been members of the original church founded by Nathan Mason and his colleagues. This view is confirmed by Mr. Chipman's remarks about "saints rejoicing, and backsliders returning." These saints and backsliders were plainly the

scattered and wandering members of the old church.

Elder Joseph Dimock describes the same event in his Journal: "The power and grace that were displayed are beyond description. The saints of God awoke from their long slumbers, backsliders returned to the fold of the Redeemer and shouted aloud the victory through a Saviour's blood, whilst saints went on their way rejoicing in what their eyes saw, their ears heard, their souls felt of God's unbounding love. Through the whole country and through the county of Cumberland there seems to be a moving of God's spirit on the minds of both saints and sinners."

From these extracts it is evident that the members of the original church were gathered together and revived, and that they chose Joseph Crandall as their pastor, called for his ordination, and united earnestly in supporting him. It was the same church, having the old members, and the same doctrines and practices as it had from its inception in 1763. For these reasons we feel justified in maintaining the claim that this church is the oldest Baptist organization in the Dominion of Canada, the real date of its formation having been 1763.

The beginning of the new century witnessed a marked change in the spiritual condition of things at Sackville. In 1800 the church purchased the present site of what is familiarly known as Bethel, and commenced the erection of a suitable place of worship. In due time the new house was completed and opened for religious services. Large congregations met from time to time, and a season of refreshing was enjoyed. For about thirty-six years this was the spiritual Zion of the community, and many souls were there born unto Christ. Elder Crandall proved to be a judicious and successful pastor filling the pulpit for many years with great ability and acceptance. Extensive revivals attended his ministry, and a fair degree of prosperity was enjoyed by the church during his pastoral supervision.

In harmony with a general movement among Baptist churches of this period, the brethren at Sackville in the year 1808, placed on record their resolution that "none but baptized believers should be received as members." Some laxity in practice had previously prevailed, but from this date the church pursued a course more consistent with scriptural doctrine and example.

Much of Elder Crandall's time was spent in missionary work. A whole province lay

before him, and he felt constrained to bear the good tidings into those regions which seemed to be lacking in religious privileges. For this kind of work his gifts and inclinations were specially adapted. Wonderful success attended his labors in this respect, and new interests were established wherever he preached the word of life. To exercise a kind of episcopal watchcare over these spiritual children afforded him special delight. Very many of the older Baptist churches in New Brunswick can trace their origin to the pioneer labors of Joseph Crandall.

In middle life he was induced by the earnest solicitations of his many friends in the county of Westmorland to accept a seat in the Provincial Legislature, as their representative. It was something new under the sun to see a Baptist parson sitting on a parliamentary bench in the role of a politician. But the seat did not seem well adapted to a man of his uncompromising character and high moral standing. His presence among the politicians of the day was as uncongenial as the presence of Elijah among the prophets of Baal. To get rid of him an absurd and unjust Act was passed in parliament, by which clergymen and teachers were rendered ineligible for membership in the assembly. Lords-bishops could sit and rule in the highest legislative organizations in the realm, but a humble Baptist bishop could not be tolerated in a Provincial parliament. The right of performing the marriage ceremony was also, at one time, denied to Baptist pastors but the iniquitous barriers were so palpably unfair that their speedy removal was easily secured. Elder Crandall might have retained his seat in parliament by abandoning the ministry of the gospel, but he was too loyal to his Master to accept worldly emoluments in preference to "the reproaches of Christ." He therefore withdrew entirely from the political arena, and devoted his time and talents to the nobler duties of his higher calling. His life was spent in diligent service in connection with the church. Most of his latter years were spent in Salisbury, where he had been instrumental in building up a strong interest. He remained in that locality, making occasional visits to Sackville and other places, until his decease, which occurred on February 20, 1858, when he had reached the mature age of eighty-seven years.

The growth of the church at Sackville was not rapid, especially in the early part of the present century. It had its gains and losses, its seasons of refreshing and its times of darkness and declension. It was cheered in the year 1810 by the presence of

the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association, which had been organized at Lower Granville ten years previously. Elder Theodore S. Harding presided as moderator, and Elder Thomas Ansley, of Bridgetown, filled the position of clerk. This was the first meeting of the body the records of which were published and preserved. The delegates from Sackville at that Association were Elder Joseph Crandall, Jonathan Cole, William Lawrence, and Joseph Read. The total membership of this church at that date is represented as having been but fifty-five, which was not much larger than it had been forty years before.

In the year 1814 David Harris, a young man of good reputation from Cornwallis, visited Sackville and preached among the people with a fair degree of acceptance. Elder Crandall had, in the meantime, decided to give his attention more fully to Salisbury and other adjacent fields. Mr. Harris was a member of the church at Horton. He had settled in the township of Aylesford previous to his conversion, and had entered upon secular business with encouraging prospects of success; but, having experienced a change of heart through the transforming influences of divine grace, he was impelled to consecrate his life to the important work of gospel preaching. On his own responsibility he started out in the grand work, having neither missionary board nor wealthy church to assist him in his efforts. He filled successive pastorates at Lower Granville, Horton, Fredericton, Sackville, and St. John. His strength seemed to lie in breaking up new ground and in scattering the good seed as widely as possible throughout the land. The results of his labors at Sackville were somewhat encouraging, though we do not learn of large accessions of the church under his ministry.

The Association met again at Sackville in the year 1820, at which gathering Elder James Munro was chosen as moderator, and Elder Charles Tupper as secretary. The home mission movement, so far at least as New Brunswick is concerned, had its origin at this meeting, and from that date onward the churches were pledged to do all in their power to care for those portions of the land which were destitute of spiritual privileges. A very interesting feature of the gathering was the ordination of three young men to the sacred office of preaching. These were Samuel McCully, Charles Miller and Timothy Robertson, all of whom proved to be successful and worthy laborers in the great

spiritual field.

Elder Samuel McCully seems to have made a very favorable impression upon the people of Sackville, for in the following year he received a cordial invitation to become pastor of the church. This was accepted. He continued, however, to reside at Amherst, where he owned a comfortable home and where he continued to assist Elder Tupper in the pastoral care of that large and growing church. Mr. McCully did not depend upon the preaching of the gospel for his pecuniary support, nor did his retiring disposition permit him to take a prominent part in general denominational work. But he was a man of marked intellectual strength and of mature judgment. His discourses were full of helpful instruction, and his presence impressed his hearers with a deep sense of his genuine sincerity and earnestness of purpose. For a period of about twelve years he seems to have alternated with Elders Tupper and Crandall in supplying the Sackville pulpit. These were strong men, both spiritually and intellectually, and those who had the privilege of listening from week to week to their thoughtful discourses on gospel themes must have been highly favored and largely blessed. We are not surprised that during this period a glorious revival took place in the community. Elder Crandall was chiefly instrumental in this important movement. The church became aroused as never before. Crowds flocked to hear the simple story of a Saviour's love, and scores came forward to testify of a new-found hope in the promises of revealed truth. Scores of persons were baptized from week to week, and the church became greatly enlarged. This extensive awakening has long been familiarly known as "the great reformation." The church gave promise at that time of becoming one of the largest and most successful in the Maritime Provinces.

Another event of paramount importance took place at Sackville in 1830. Elder Tupper, having become aroused to a sense of the necessity of giving prominence to the subject of temperance, delivered some stirring addresses and sermons on this topic at Sackville and other places. The people became greatly moved by these pointed appeals. A temperance society was at once formed and large numbers of persons, both old and young, cheerfully enrolled their names in the list of members. This is said to have been the first society of the kind organized in New Brunswick. The good work went steadily forward whilst the zeal of its pro-

moters seemed to grow warmer as the years passed by. The seeds sown in this community sixty-two years ago are still bringing forth a precious harvest. True, the evil of intemperance has not yet been wholly stamped out, but Sackville has from that time to the present been one of the most energetic parishes in the land in striving to save the people from the ruin wrought by the traffic in strong drink.

About the year 1833 Elder Tupper removed from Amherst to Prince Edward Island to assume the charge of the church at Bedeque. This change added to the pastoral burden of Elder McCully, who had now the entire field at Amherst under his care. This necessarily left Sackville with less oversight than it had hitherto enjoyed. It was therefore deemed advisable, after mature deliberation, to seek for a suitable pastor who should be able to give all his strength to a church which had now become large and prosperous.

Rev. Robert Davis, a Welsh preacher of good abilities, who had visited various provincial churches, and who had been led to visit the place was received favorably by the people and afterwards invited to become pastor of the church. Mr. Davis had been a soldier in the army and many of those stern qualities which are necessary to make a good officer on the field of battle, clung to him even when in the milder service of the Prince of Peace. His rigid military discipline had imparted to him and overbearing an uncompromising spirit. As on the battle field, so in the church, the sight of an opponent was the signal for drawing the sword, and when once the glittering blade was unsheathed there was nothing to be done but fight like heroes till one party or the other licked the dust. It is not surprising therefore to find that warfare became the employment of his flock. Difficulties speedily arose in the church, and divisions were occasioned which it required about half a century to adjust. The first subject of dispute among the brethren was, whether a parsonage recently erected should be presented to the pastor as a gift, or retained by the church as permanent property for the benefit of future pastors? It will be readily admitted that on such a question almost any pastor would find it difficult to give an impartial opinion. The only wonder is that such a question should have arisen. It was, after all, rather an exhibition of weakness on the part of the friends of the pastor to try to overload him with kindness, than a serious fault in the minister to seem willing to accept such excessive favors. It was the "kindness

that kills;" and we scarcely know which class of persons a pastor needs more to dread, those who are disposed to worship him as a God, or those who dislike him as they do the Devil. And the preacher who is injured by the one class is destroyed by the other. Mr. Davis soon found himself on another field of Waterloo, with the difference that he was on the losing side. The church became hopelessly divided into hostile parties, and the austere bearing of the pastor only increased the dissension. Certain differences in doctrinal views also came in to add intensity to the already overstrained feelings of angry brethren. As a result of these unfortunate circumstances the very existence of the church seemed for some time to be in great peril. The separation between the two classes of disputants became so complete that they no longer met together for business or for worship.

After a few ineffectual efforts to restore harmony, an appeal was made to Elder Crandall and other ministers to consider the difficulty and give advice. A council was called at which it soon became apparent that the difficulty was of such a character as to give but little hope for permanent reconciliation. After some consideration it was decided that the organization of a second church was the only course likely to lead to satisfactory results. The Second Church, as it was henceforth called, was accordingly formed; and Elder Crandall consented to take the oversight of the new interest until a more suitable arrangement could be made.

As there was but one place of worship for both churches, held in the possession of both parties, no little difficulty was experienced in making satisfactory arrangements as to the hours of service for each party. The congregations met alternately, but, as might naturally be expected, many collisions occurred which tended to widen the breach between the two parties. Much zeal in religious matters was, however, shown by both sections. The spirit of emulation, aroused in the breasts of the people, led many to contribute with a degree of liberality altogether beyond anything they had previously or have since shown. It would almost seem to be desirable that a good big church quarrel should arise occasionally to induce some to contribute generously and to attend religious services with some degree of regularity. Never have the pews been better filled, or the church treasury more adequately supplied, than during those times when the church has been rent in sunder by unseemly discord. The Devil never

lacks funds in any enterprise in which he engages; and when he undertakes to run a church he can do it with greater financial success than either Paul or Barnabas.

After the disruption in the church had been found to be irreconcilable, Elder Davis deemed it prudent to seek a pastorate elsewhere. He was succeeded in his oversight of First Church by William Sears, a native of the parish and a man of very good abilities. In agreement with a resolution of the brethren, Mr. Sears had for many years been in the habit of leading social meetings in the pastor's absence. His exhortations and general bearing were so acceptable to the church that he was urged by his friends to devote his life to the work of preaching the gospel. Impressed with the conviction that he was called by God to his sphere of usefulness, he was induced to enter fully upon pastoral duties, and he was duly ordained to the good work. After the departure of Elder Davis, Mr. Sears gave his best energies to the promotion of the spiritual welfare of the flock over which he was appointed shepherd. His labors were not without encouraging results, for he had the privilege of welcoming many converts into the fellowship of the church.

The gatherings of the two congregations for religious worship were held alternately in the same building, but this arrangement did not tend to promote a spirit of harmony among the brethren. As might naturally be expected, many occasions for minor difficulties arose from time to time, and it was at length decided by the members of the Second Church to erect a suitable place of worship for themselves. A site was accordingly selected within a few yards of the old sanctuary, and vigorous efforts were put forth in forwarding the new enterprise. On the 2nd day of April, 1842, the building was completed, and what has ever since been known as Bethel was publicly dedicated by appropriate services. There was something noticeable in the strange proximity of the two houses of worship. Had they belonged to different denominations, it would not have seemed so odd. But that two churches of the same faith and order should locate their meeting houses so near together savored somewhat of either marked friendliness or threatening antagonism. On opposite sides of the narrow entrance to the harbor of Muscat, in Eastern Arabia, stand two strong fortresses, erected to defend the approaches to the city. When the officers of the forts are on friendly terms this purpose is carried out with reasonable fidelity; but when feelings of jeal-

ously unhappily arise between them, the guns of the strongholds are turned upon one another with disastrous effects, and it has even happened more than once, that both forts have turned their destructive engines of war upon the very city they were established to defend. Two contiguous churches of the same denominational order may sometimes, in mistaken zeal, fall into the error of the forts at Muscat, turning their dangerous weapons of carnal warfare upon each other, or vying with one another in destroying the very cause they were organized to defend. This, however, was not quite the case in relation to the two sanctuaries at Sackville. There would seem, indeed, to have been at first a serious feeling of hostility between the two bodies, but the lapse of years gradually effected a more agreeable condition of affairs. Elders Crandall and Sears were both favorable to peace and harmony, and they did all in their power to allay asperities and to bring about a genuine reconciliation between the alienated parties.

In the meantime the members of the First Church began to realize the disadvantage under which they were placed in trying to hold their congregation from being drawn away by the greater attractions of the new house of worship. The old temple had grown somewhat antiquated, leaky, and uncomfortable. It had been a good house in its day, and around it were gathered many hallowed memories of pentecostal revivals; but the time had come when a more suitable and commodious place of meeting must be provided if the church desired to maintain its very existence. The decision to arise and build was speedily reached. A good site was chosen at what is known as the "Four Corners," and the work of erecting a new meeting house was commenced. Had the money contributed for this unnecessary undertaking been expended in some more useful department of church work it would have been productive of far grander results. The enterprise was, however, pushed forward with commendable energy, and the new sanctuary was formally opened for public worship in January, 1844.

Though somewhat diminished in numbers and weakened in financial strength, since the unhappy division had taken place, the First Church now began to show encouraging signs of enlargement and prosperity. Large and interested congregations met regularly for worship. People came from Wood Point, Beech Hill, Midgic, Westmorland Point, Jolicure

Point de Bute and even from Bay Verte. At the present time two or three miles seem more formidable to some of our members than fifteen or twenty did to their grandfathers.

In the year 1846 both churches became pastorless, Elder Crandall having decided to give his attention more fully to Salisbury, and Elder Sears having received a call to another community. This seemed to be a favorable opportunity for uniting in the support of one pastor even if a more intimate organic union could not yet be effected. A movement was accordingly made in that direction and a general feeling of favor was expressed.

Early in the year 1846 Rev. Willard G. Parker, of Nova Scotia, was induced to come and assume pastoral charge of both churches. Mr. Parker was a native of Wilmot, N. S., having been born in 1816. In early life he was converted and called to the work of preaching. At New Albany he was ordained in 1843, remaining there in successful service for three years. Thence he came to Sackville. He was a man of good ability and genial disposition, a friend to everybody and a foe to none. Many converts were welcomed into the church during his ministry, and much advancement was made by the church in all departments of its work. He held occasional services at Sackville, and established the branch of the church in that locality—known afterwards as Salem. A commodious house of worship was erected, and a large congregation gathered together. This section of the church has grown to be a strong and active centre of spiritual influence. Mr. Parker also conducted occasional services at Wood Point and thus originated the good work which has resulted in the establishment of the present interest in that section of the field. He resigned his charge of the First Church in 1848, giving a greater portion of his time to the Second, and holding regular services at Midgic and Point de Bute, where growing congregations assembled to hear the word of life.

The members of the First Church residing at Point de Bute deemed it desirable to become organized into a separate body. Application was accordingly made, in 1850, for letters of discussion in order to carry out this purpose. The request was granted. Two years later the new church was duly constituted, Elder Parker continuing for two years longer to exercise the pastoral oversight. Considerable additions were made to the church, a place of worship was erected, and a fair degree of prosperity seemed to be enjoyed by the

brethren in that growing community.

After the resignation of Elder Parker the pulpit of the First Church was supplied by different ministers. For six months of 1849, Rev. Jarvis Ring, a native of Canning, N. B., preached to the congregation. He did not remain long in Sackville, having received a call to Bridgetown, N. S. He was succeeded by Elder Patrick Duffy, a native of the North of Ireland, who had come to this country in 1820, and who had been brought up in the Roman Catholic faith. After his conversion he embraced the doctrines and practices of the Baptists and received the ordinance of baptism at the hands of Elder Crandall. He was ordained as an evangelist at Hillsboro, Albert County, in 1849, from which date he labored as a missionary in various parts of Albert and Westmorland counties. More in this capacity than as a pastor he spent one year in preaching, for part of his time, in connection with the First Church. His residence was at Hillsboro. He was a fair preacher, a diligent worker, and a kind-hearted man. Elder John Francis frequently visited the place and filled the pulpit with great acceptance.

In August, 1852, Rev. Levi Marshall, a native of Wilmot, N. S., was called to the pastoral superintendence of both churches. He had been led in 1837 to consecrate his life to Christ, and his ordination took place at Arxyle, Yarmouth county, in 1847. After spending several years in laboring in various parts of Nova Scotia, especially at Londonderry, he came at the date already mentioned to Sackville. He remained little more than a year in this field, after which he did good work at Harvey and Hopewell. He died in 1866 in his native land.

The next pastor was Rev. W. A. Coleman, a native of New Brunswick, who took the oversight of both churches from the close of 1853 till the autumn of 1855. Mr. Coleman was born near the River St. John in 1816, and was ordained at North Esk in 1845. As a pastor he was judicious, unassuming, and zealous. His preaching was sound and instructive, and he was instrumental in doing a good work in this field. During his entire ministry he baptized one thousand and fifty persons. In all philanthropic efforts he cheerfully took part, and he was greatly esteemed by the people generally.

Rev. G. F. Miles was the next incumbent. He came to the field in 1856, and for about two years he labored in connection with both churches. Pastor Miles was a man of abounding humor and

ready wit. It sparkled in his eyes, and made him a favorite in all social circles. He was also tender-hearted and sympathetic, a kind friend to the poor, and a real helper to earnest seekers. The church made substantial progress under his ministrations. At the close of his pastoral labors the churches again became separate in their operations.

Rev. David Lawson was invited to take charge of the First Church in 1858. He accepted the call, and for three years he performed the duties of his office with much assiduity. An extensive revival took place during his stay, bringing a large number of converts into the church. Most of his life has been devoted to preaching the gospel in this part of the province. He is now well advanced in years and the infirmities of age press upon him; but, though unhappily alienated from his brethren on account of certain doctrinal peculiarities, he is still out on the field, like a veteran warrior, lifting up the banner of the cross as the only hope of a lost world.

During the same period the Second Church enjoyed the ministrations of Rev. David McKeen. His labors as pastor were blessed in the spiritual edification of the church. He was much esteemed by his flock. Many of his friends have regretted that the encumbering cares of farm life have tended to hinder him from filling the place in the denomination and from accomplishing the work in the church for which his gifts and graces so fully qualify him.

The brethren at Middle asked for letters of dismission in 1859 for the purpose of forming themselves into a distinct body. Their request met with a cordial compliance on the part of the First church, with which they were connected, and in due time the new interest was fully organized. Since that time they have made a fair measure of progress in spiritual growth. Rev. A. H. Lavers is at present discharging, with much efficiency, the duties of pastor.

In the year 1861, after the departure of pastors McKeen and Lawson, Rev. Thos. Todd was called to the watchcare of both churches. Mr. Todd was born in Ireland in 1824. Converted under the preaching of Rev. Samuel Robinson, at St. John, he felt impelled to enter the ministry, and in 1848 he was ordained at Woodstock, where he remained as pastor for eleven years. Subsequently he spent two years in financial work for the denomination, after which he came to Sackville. Here he remained nearly twelve years, from 1861 till 1878.

Possessed of a good constitution, he never missed an appointment and scarcely ever spent a day in the role of an invalid. Many conversions took place during his pastoral oversight of the church, and a good deal of harmony prevailed throughout the field. He was a careful financier, and few ministers can say, with Elder Todd, that for thirty-three years they never labored a week without receiving proper remuneration. In 1873 he removed to Moncton.

For a few months the First Church at Sackville was supplied by Elder C. H. Carpenter, who had been ordained at Bay-side in 1868. Rev. G. F. Miles was again called to minister to this church. He accepted the invitation and remained in charge for about two years, till September, 1876. The Second Church was cared for during the same time by Elder W. A. Coleman who continued to labor, so far as declining health would permit, till March, 1877, when he passed away to his heavenly reward. Rev. D. McKeen lent timely assistance during Pastor Coleman's final illness and for some time after his death.

Towards the close of 1878 Mr. G. E. Good, a licentiate from New Brunswick, visited Sackville and spent some time in supplying both pulpits. His preaching made a favorable impression, and both churches united in extending to him a call to the pastorate. This was accepted, and on September 1st of the same year he was duly ordained. The churches were enlarged by accessions to their numbers as a result of Pastor Good's earnest labors. At the end of one year his connection with the First Church ceased, and his time was more fully given to the demands of the Second. Encouraging progress was made at Wood Point, and a neat and comfortable house of worship was erected in that locality, where regular services have been held ever since. The pulpit of the First Church was supplied in the meantime by Rev. D. McKeen for about two years.

Sackville was visited in July, 1882, by D. G. McDonald, one of the sturdy and popular sons of Prince Edward Island. His preaching was much appreciated. Both churches united in giving him a cordial invitation to the vacant pulpits; and the call was accepted. Pastor McDonald had been a vigorous and successful laborer in other fields and his indomitable energy seemed well adapted to the demands of the large churches over which he was called to preside. A great undertaking lay before him. Soon after entering upon his labors he made an earnest effort to bring about an organic union of the two bodies.

He manifested much wisdom and valiant perseverance in this purpose. But though the desired end seemed at times to be almost attained, a long journey fraught with saddening experiences had to be made though the wilderness before the fair Canaan of success was reached and the devoted leader, like Moses on Nebo, was not permitted to enter into the enjoyment of the coveted goal, but simply to view at a distance the enrapturing scene.

In January, 1883, a meeting of the members of both churches was held at Sackville at which a resolution was passed by a very large majority favoring a union of the two bodies. A meeting of the Second Church had been held previously to consider the propriety of forming such a union. The discussion of the question was carried on with much warmth, at the close of which the vote was taken, showing a small majority in favor of union. The majority accordingly intimated to their brethren of the First Church that they were favorable to the proposed unification. The general meeting was, therefore, called as already stated, and a very strong expression given in favor of the movement. It was claimed that, by this vote of the united membership of the two churches, the union was consummated, and that nothing remained to be done but to extend greetings to the newly married couple. But there is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip. A number of persons, who had voted against the union, and who claimed to represent the Second Church, declined to abide by the decision of their brethren. For two years longer these brethren, under the pastoral care of Elders E. C. Corey and D. McKeen, continued to hold the property of the church of which they claimed to be the representatives, and to worship separately and manage the business of the church as their predecessors had done. Meetings were held to settle the difficulty, Associations were invoked for advice, and many unsuccessful attempts were made to win over the dissenting members. Finally, after a great deal of discussion and some mutual concessions, the much desired union was duly effected in April, 1885, a special provision of the agreement being that all the pastors and other officers of the two bodies should vacate the positions they held, that the united church might be free to select its own officials. Henceforth the united body was to be known as the Sackville Baptist church. Thus the unhappy division which had existed in the community for half a century was satisfactorily terminated. A few lingering

feelings of dissent may still be found here and there among the veterans who fought gallantly on the battle-field; but the old schism is almost forgotten by the great majority of the people. It has become a thing of the past—a curious relic to preserve in the museum of history.

The new man, chosen by the united church as pastor of the flock, was Rev. W. E. Hall, of Hill-boro, N.S. A better choice could scarcely have been made. He entered upon his duties late in the fall of 1885, and for about five years he continued to labor with his wonted zeal and success in gospel work. His genial disposition and kindly nature aided greatly in removing any discordant elements which may have lingered in the minds of the brethren. Rich spiritual blessings followed his efforts and many gladly united with the church. The erection of the beautiful place of worship at Sackville was due mainly to Elder Hall's untiring exertions. After a successful pastorate of five years he resigned his charge and accepted a call to the Tabernacle at Halifax.

Little more remains to be added. The present pastor, Elder W. H. Warren, came to the field in May, 1891, in compliance with a cordial invitation. He found a comparatively united body, and many warm-hearted and helpful friends. The field has been found to be too large for the adequate oversight of one man. But a quiet work of grace has been in progress for some time, a number of promising young converts have united with the church, and there are encouraging indications of spiritual growth. These cheering facts lead us to hope that larger blessings are yet to be enjoyed. Under the favoring influences of the Spirit of God, Sackville Baptist church gives promise of becoming one of the largest and most influential centres of spiritual power in the Maritime Provinces.

The three sections of the field are, Sackville, Upper Sackville and Wood Point, at all of which places there are comfortable places of worship. Flourishing Sunday schools and interesting prayer-meetings are regularly sustained in those sections. The property of the church, consisting of three meeting-houses, a parsonage with

seven acres of excellent land and a plot of four acres of marshland, is vested in a Board of Trustees, namely, Harvey Phinney, Edward Read, Walter Fowler, Walter Cahill, Josiah J. Anderson, Hiram Read, and Thomas A. Kinnear.

It may be interesting to name the officers of the church from its re-organization in 1800. Joshua Read was chosen as deacon in 1809, Agreen Tingley in 1814, and John Patterson in 1823.

After the great disruption, the deacons of the First Church were: Frederick Sears, John Anderson, James Anderson, Joseph Sears, John Tingley, John Cahill, James Lawrence, John B. Tingley, John Sears, Alex. Anderson and Lennox Kinnear.

The deacons of the Second Church were: Eliphalet Read, Cyrus Black, Laban Lawrence, John Thomson, John Ford, Christopher Harper, William Ayer, Titus Hicks, and Lova Wheaton. Rueben Thomson also filled the office for a short period.

At present the deacons are: Harvey Phinney, Charles W. Richardson, John Ford, Walter Fowler, Harford Palmer, at Sackville; Chipman Harper, Willard Thomson and Hiram Read, at Upper Sackville; and Jacob Croker, and William Snowden, at Wood Point. The first clerk of whom we have any record was Agreen Tingley. James Estabrooks came next. After the separation, the clerks of the First Church were: John Sears and Josiah Tingley, the latter of whom filled the office for a period of about forty years.

Eliphalet Read, Dr. P. C. Moore, Hiram Read and Charles E. Lund were clerks of the Second Church.

Since the reunion of the bodies, Harvey Phinney has been general clerk, whilst Chandler Sears has officiated as local clerk at Bethel, and Sanford Barnes at Wood Point.

There is good material in this interesting field for solid work. A deeper consecration to the master's service is greatly needed, and a more general willingness on the part of the male members of the church to aid in carrying forward the good work. The sisters have always done their part with alacrity, and the young people seem to give promise of becoming zealous helpers in the great enterprise.